

Queen's Park report

by Al McLean
MPP Simcoe East

Over the past weeks I have received a number of letters commenting on news reports that Dr. Morgentaler intends to establish abortion clinics in Ontario.

Many of these letters did not have return addresses and it proved impossible for me to personally reply. I have, however, taken this opportunity to explain fully where the law stands with respect to abortion in Ontario.

Under the Criminal Code of Canada the only kind of abortion that is permitted is therapeutic abortion. This kind of abortion deals only with cases where a continuation of pregnancy poses a serious threat to the life or health of the mother.

Therapeutic abortions cannot be performed in clinics. This kind of abortion can only be performed in a hospital where a committee, appointed by the hospital board, carefully reviews each case.

The Criminal Code is federal legislation and the responsibility for

enforcing its laws rests with the Attorney General of Ontario. I have spoken with our Province's Attorney General, the Honourable Roy McMurtry, and he advised me that his office will strictly adhere to the law.

This means that any attempt to perform an abortion in Ontario which is not sanctioned by the Criminal Code will result in a police investigation, and should the investigation disclose sufficient evidence, charges will be laid.

The Ministry of Health is keeping constant watch on the quality of hospital care offered on Ontarians. They are satisfied that the public hospital system has the capacity to meet the needs of Ontarians for therapeutic abortions and that there is no need for new private hospitals or clinics.

Ontario's position on this question is clear. The current system for providing therapeutic abortion, as outlined in the federal Criminal Code, meets the needs of Ontarians. In short, the system works.

Elmvale a part of peace meeting

Local people from Elmvale, as well as Barrie, Alliston, and Orillia, will describe what is happening in the peace movement in Simcoe County at a Project Ploughshares meeting this evening, organizers say.

Ted Schmidt, head of Teachers for Social Justice, is also scheduled to speak. The

meeting will be held in Collier Street United Church School Room, Barrie.

Schmidt is head of religious studies at Neil McNeil High School in Toronto, and is active in peace concerns within the Roman Catholic community. He writes for New Times, an award-winning Roman Catholic newspaper.

From more than 100 to 10 in just one week!

What a difference one week made! During Midland council's inaugural meeting, Dec. 6, more than 100 ratepayers packed into the council chambers to watch the action.

Not so, Monday night (Dec. 13) when only 10

people—three women and seven men—turned up to watch council get down to brass tacks.

As for the meeting itself, it was conducted in record time.

Deadline for lobster brunch tickets

John Arpin and his trio and Catherine Wilson, another pianist, will be providing the entertainment this Sunday at the third annual lobster brunch at the Budd Watson Gallery. Money raised supports research into cystic fibrosis.

Entertainment will be provided throughout

the afternoon, from 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The guest of honour Sunday will be Dr. Douglas Clozier, a former head of the cystic fibrosis department at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

Tickets to the lobster brunch are still available, until tomorrow, at the Gallery.

Contact
Community information
526-9333 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

by Irene Quesnelle
Administrator

Mental Health Association will again be placing boxes locally to collect gifts for patients at the Mental Health Centre.

The five locations in our area are in Penetanguishene: Poyntz Plaza I.G.A. store, Bay Pharmacy.

In Midland gifts may be dropped off at Jason's store in the Huronia Mall, Jory's I.D.A. Pharmacy and Woolworth's. Gifts such as cigarettes, socks, candy would be appreciated.

At this time of year all of us will be attending and holding more social functions than usual. As hosts and hostesses we have a responsibility to our guests to avoid the possibility of drunken driving after the party.

The best way to avoid this possibility is to take some practical steps before the party begins.

You as host or hostess, can lessen the danger of alcohol abuse by the refreshments (food and drinks) you serve, and the way you serve them. Always serve food with alcohol, as a full stomach retards the passage of alcohol into the bloodstream, thereby slowing the rate at which intoxication begins.

Guests mixing their own drinks might well use an available jigger rather than pouring what seems to be the "right amount". It is less likely they will drink to excess if standard measures for drinks are used. Have soft drinks, coffee, tea or a non-alcoholic punch available for your guests who choose not to drink or personal or medical reasons. Don't force drinks on your guests.

Under normal circumstances, the body can metabolize about one drink an hour. Although you want your guests to enjoy themselves, you don't want them to overdo it. Don't rush

to refill their glasses the minute they become empty.

Many guests accept drinks they don't want to avoid appearing rude. If you observe guests who are drinking too much try to engage them in conversation to slow their drinking. Offer food to slow down the rate at which their body is absorbing alcohol. Offer to mix their next drink and make it a light one. Stop serving alcohol well before the party is to end.

Top off the evening with snacks and coffee or tea. By emphasizing food and non-alcoholic drinks towards the end of the party, you give your guests extra time for their bodies to eliminate the alcohol they have consumed. With a lower alcohol content in their blood, it will be safer for them to drive home.

Even under the best circumstances, there's always the chance some people will drink too much. If one of your guests has been drinking excessively, you should see to it that he/she does not drive. Offer to drive your guest home, she/he can always come back for the car at a later date—when sober. Suggest your guest stay overnight at your home.

The possibility of saving a friend's life should outweigh any inconvenience to you. Take away car keys, or use physical restraint. This sounds a bit drastic, but if your friend is drunk he/she is in no position to responsibly decide on a course of action. You must take charge. Or call a taxi, pay for the cab yourself. Your friend can't object to a free ride home. Above all have a safe and happy holiday season.

The solution to even the most difficult problem begins with the first step. If you have a problem take the first step, call CONTACT your community information centre today.

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